

City of Rowlett
Regular Meeting
Animal Shelter Advisory Board
Wednesday, September 23, 2009
City hall Conference Room
4000 Main Street, Rowlett Texas

Meeting Minutes

I. Call to order

Chairman, Dr. Lori Trahan called to order the regular meeting of the Rowlett Animal Shelter Advisory Board at 7:18 pm on Wednesday, September 23, 2009. The roll call was conducted via sign in sheet. The following members were present: Dr. Lori Trahan, Katherine Rinz, Jeri Fontenot, Scott New, Joe Tilger and Jeff Ochsner. Special guest present: Police Chief Matt Walling, Asst. Police Lamar Evans and Lt. Marvin Gibbs.

II. Consider approving the Minutes from the March 24, 2009 and April 1, 2009 meetings.

Dr. Lori Trahan opened the item and immediately gave the floor to Jeff Ochsner. Jeff Ochsner advised the chairmen that each of the minutes should be discussed and considered separately. Dr. Trahan agreed.

II (a). Consider approving the Minutes from the March 24, 2009 meeting.

The Minutes from the March 24, 2009 meeting were passed out and board members were given time to review the Minutes. The Chairman, Dr. Lori Trahan opened the floor for comments or question. The Chairman recognized Joe Tilger. Mr. Tilger told the board that he was responsible for the taping of that meeting and due to some technical problems with the recording device, the meeting hadn't been tape. He went on to say that he had taken notes and was able to complete the Minutes from those notes. Katherine Rinz said that that item V. needed to be changed to reflect that it was Dr. Trahan that made the suggestion that the animal shelter news letter be sent out local Veterinary Clinics, Pet Stores, etc... Dr. Trahan asked if there was any further discussion needed on the Minutes and none was made. Dr. Trahan asked for a motion to accept the Minutes as written with the one amended change. Motion was made by Katherine Rinz and seconded by Scott New. Motion passed with none opposed.

II (b). Consider approving the Minutes from the April 1, 2009 meeting.

The Chairman, Dr. Lori Trahan opened the item and asked if there was any discussion on the Minutes from April 1, 2009 and none was made. Dr. Trahan asked for motion to approve the Minutes as written. Motion was made by Scott New and seconded by Katherine Rinz. Motion passed with none opposed.

Prior to opening the next item up for discussion, Chairman, Dr. Lori Trahan decided to revise the agenda order and move item V. up to the next item to be opened.

III. Receive an update on departmental structure and personnel changes involving Animal Control.

The Chairman, Dr. Lori Trahan opened the item for discussion and recognized and gave the floor to special guest, Police Chief Matt Walling. Police Chief Walling said that over the past two and more recently the city has undergone several departmental changes throughout organization in an effort to improve the efficiency of each department with the staff available. The Chief went on to say that this year's budget did away with the Developmental Services Division and the Police Department opened a Community Service Division in which the Animal Control Division is now a part of that Division. He went on to explain the various changes made throughout the city departments and the reason why a Community Service Division was created by the Police Department. Police Chief Matt Walling gave an in depth, lengthy discussion about many changes that have occurred within the Police Department and the future direction he was leading the department into over the next few years and beyond.

The Chairman next gave the floor to special guest Lt. Marvin Gibbs. Lt. Gibbs gave the board a brief summary of his history with the Police Department and his vision for the future direction of the Community Service Division. Lt. Gibbs went on to discuss the work plan that Community Service Division had for the Animal Control Division and the goals behind that plan.

Dr. Trahan asked Chief Walling if he knew of other cities that have similar organizational structure to the way things have been restructured. Chief Walling explained that he has seen the changes in both directions. He explained that he believed the trend seems to be Animal Control going back under the Police Departments and added that he had no hard data to back up his belief.

The Board Members asked a few more questions about the work plan, enforcement issues and the budget. The Chief gave brief summarized answers to each of these questions with the help of Lt. Gibbs and Asst. Chief Lamar Evans. With one further question asked, the Chairman closed the item from discussion.

IV. Discuss the status of the tethering ordinance.

Chairman, Dr. Lori Trahan opened the item for discussion and gave the floor to Jeff Ochsner. Jeff Ochsner stated on Tuesday, August 18, 2009 the proposed recommended changes to amend the Tethering Ordinance was submitted to the City Council for comments and directions. Mr. Ochsner went on to say that it was his belief that the City Council was satisfied with the proposed changes and only one Council member asked about the enforcement of this ordinance if it were voted into law. Mr. Ochsner told the board that it was his plan to take an education approach first in the enforcement of this ordinance. He went on to say that a follow up question was asked by a Council Member about what kind of impact it would have on present owners who tether their dogs that would cause them to be in violation of the proposed ordinance. Mr. Ochsner said that he told the Council that this same issue was discussed at length among the Board Members and they were satisfied with the proposed changes as written. Mr. Ochsner said that next step in this process would be for the proposed changes be given to the City Attorney for review and to make sure it has been written with the correct language required to be enacted into an ordinance. He went on to say once the City Attorney had completed the review, the proposed ordinance would be placed on a consent agenda for possible enactment by the City Council. Minor discussions between board members and Police Chief Matt Walling added that the City Attorney had completed his revision and the item had been placed on the City Council Consent Agenda for October 20, 2009 meeting. After further discussion among Board Members, Dr. Trahan closed the item.

V. Discuss the process of rescue organizations taking pets from the Shelter and the possibility of adding foster homes for the Shelter.

Charmin, Dr. Lori opened the item for discussion and explained that she put this item in summary in an effort to encompass a much broader question asked by Jeri Fontenot. Dr. Trahan then gave the floor to Jeri Fontenot for further explanation. Jeri Fontenot explained that recently the group FRAs had sponsored two cats at the animal shelter and those cats were euthanized rather than being kept for adoption which upset members of FRAs. Ms. Fontenot went on to say that she didn't know how many times this had occurred in the past, but this incident had been brought to her attention. Ms. Fontenot said that she had seen posting of animals for adoption on Craig's list that were about to be euthanized. She went on to say that the posting had a picture of the animal along with other information about the animal and where it could be adopted. Ms. Fontenot said further that what she was requesting if an animal is about to be euthanized, that FRAs be notified and a picture be sent to their group in order to post that picture out for people and on websites and other email lists.

Ms. Fontenot continued on with a second item about fostering programs. She said that she was aware of other area shelter that had fostering programs and wanted us to look into and discuss starting a fostering program for our shelter. The Chairman recognized Joe Tilger who had requested to make some comments. Mr. Tilger went on to say that by our procedures we were required to hold strays for five days and after the five days the animal may be placed for adoption or transferred to rescue. Mr. Tilger continued to say that euthanasia can occur without notice due to shelter population, health, temperament issues. Mr. Tilger said that while he was with the City of Farmers Branch, they tried a foster program for about six weeks and due to an array of problems that resulted from the program, City Management discontinued the fostering program. Police Chief Walling asked Mr. Tilger about what kind of a success rate did they have in getting an animal adopted that was at a foster home and not at the shelter. Mr. Tilger went into some details about the various challenges they faced with the fostering program when he was with the City of Farmers Branch and why the program was discontinued.

Discussion continued on these issues for awhile and then the item was closed by Dr. Trahan.

VI. Public announcements.

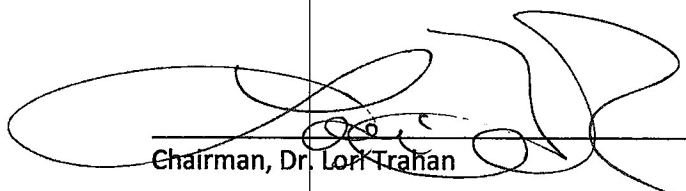
Dr. Trahan opened the floor for public announcements. Jeri Fontenot made the announcement of the Adoption Event and Micro-chip Clinic that were schedule to take place on Saturday, October 17, 2009. No other announcements were made and the item was closed.

VII. Topics for future agenda meetings.

Dr. Trahan asked if there were any topics that members would like to discuss. Katherine Rinz requested that the status of the recommended changes to the redemption fees and adoption fees be placed on the next agenda. Dr. Trahan acknowledged her request. After more discussion among Board Members, Dr. Trahan asked Chief Walling if the work plan goals be placed on an upcoming agenda. Chief Walling agreed. Katherine Rinz asked if a discussion about Shelter Newsletter be placed on an agenda and Dr. Trahan agreed. Katherine Rinz also said that the Board needed to discuss the joint meeting with the City Council. Joe Tilger said that the Board was schedule to meet with the City Council the first week in December. Ms. Rinz voiced her concerns about the fact that there was only 10 weeks left to discuss the items to be cover in the preparation for that meeting.

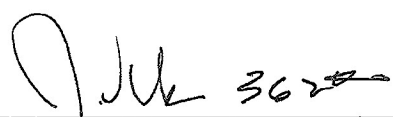
VIII. Adjournment

Chairman Dr. Lori Trahan adjourned the meeting.



Chairman, Dr. Lori Trahan

12-10-09
Date approved



Jeff Ochser, Assigned City Staff